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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth in the field of interpersonal communication is reflected in both the introduction of courses dealing with the personalized involvement of people with each other and the prolific output of related educational resources. Specific representative samples of current resource selections include four texts dealing solely with interpersonal communication, excluding treatments of group discussion and public speaking; two books concerning nonverbal communication; six texts including related classroom activities; and two sources containing selected bibliographies. (JM)

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CS 500 808

SELECTED EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES IN INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Joanne S. Yamauchi

Interpersonal communication includes the study of informal, primarily dyadic, face-to-face, personalized sharing of interests, opinions, and feelings.[1] The rapid growth of this humanistic area of communication study is reflected in the introduction of interpersonal communication courses into curricula of numerous communication departments across the country and by the prolific output of related educational resources. To keep abreast of current contributions to the field of interpersonal communication, this review discusses representative samples of current selections that include texts on (1) interpersonal communication--those that deal solely with the subject and exclude treatments of group discussion and public speaking, (2) nonverbal communication, (3) related classroom exercises, and (4) selected bibliographies.

A good introductory overview of the field can be found in Interpersonal Communication: Teaching Strategies and Resources edited by Alton Barbour and Alvin Goldberg. This handbook (1) explains the distinctive features of interpersonal communication, (2) pinpoints relevant sub-areas to be covered in the classroom, (3) discusses instructional approaches that are peculiar to the field, and (4) provides an extensive bibliography of related educational resources. Available from the Speech Communication Association, this paperback is well worth the two dollar price tag.

As a basic text, John Keltner's Elements of Interpersonal Communication (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1973) provides a

behaviorally oriented contribution. The revised edition includes a helpful list of behavioral objectives that precedes chapters on communication models, the self-concept, meanings, feedback, nonverbal communication, perception, decision-making, persuasion, communication conflict, and barriers to interpersonal communication. Another revised edition is Interpersonal Communication Basic Text and Readings (New York: Harper and Row, 1974) by Bobby Patton and Kim Griffin. The result of the authors' synthesis of the original two-book set is a revised set of perspectives that includes techniques for improving interpersonal relationships. Integrated into the text are fine readings, examples which include excerpts from Boulding's The Image, Shostrom's The Manipulator, and Rogers' Being in Relationship. Among the collection of readings on the market is John Stewart's Bridges Not Walls A Book About Interpersonal Communication (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1973). This collection contains insightful essays on the transactional view of communication, empathetic listening, self-disclosure, and selected views on interpersonal communication presented by Stewart's own students as well as Buber, Fromm, and Rogers.

One of the most popular areas of interpersonal communication is that of nonverbal communication. Beyond Words An Introduction to Nonverbal communication by Randall Harrison (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1974) provides a multi-diciplinary, systems approach to the study of nonverbal interaction. In addition to the very readable discussions of nonverbal codes of the body, time, and space, Harrison provides an enlightening look at "mediatory codes" utilized in the media. Also worth your attention is Mark Knapp's Nonverbal Communication in

human Interaction (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1972) a comprehensive synthesis of nonverbal research together with a discussion of specific techniques of observing and recording nonverbal behavior.

The nature of interpersonal communication lends itself to a more participatory type of learning in which many classroom excercises can be utilized to illustrate communication principles. Excellent sources of activities are found in the conclusion of the chapters of all of the basic texts discussed previously. Also, there is a collection of exercises in Helen Krupar's Communication Games (New York: Free Press, 1973) that includes exercises on nonverbal communication and interracial communication. Nothing Never Happens Exercises to Trigger Group Discussions and Promote Self-Discovery With Selected Readings (Beverly Hills, California:Glencoe Press, 1974) by Kenneth Johnson et. al. is a current collection of exercises that also contains thought-provoking excerpts from sources like The Soft Revolution by Postman and Weingartner, Sense Relaxation Below Your Mind by Gunther, and The Transparent Self by Jourard. Finally, there is the Interpersonal Communication Clearinghouse edited by Chuck Wise (Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas) which includes packets of classroom hand-outs, bibliographies, and short articles submitted by fellow instructors of interpersonal communication. This material is available for the nominal cost of postage and ditto printing.

In addition to the bibliographies that are located in the texts previously mentioned, there is the Selected Bibliography on Interpersonal Relationships compiled by Lorie Gombin. This bibliography contains fifty-five entries that focus on specific types of interpersonal relationships: employer-employ-

ee, student-teacher, and parent-child. There is no charge for this item which can be ordered from the Speech Communication Association. Another free SCA Bibliography is on Nonverbal Communication compiled by Ralph Smith.

By the time this review is printed, there will be undoubtedly many additional resources in interpersonal communication that will have been published. This burgeoning amount of resources reflects the ever increasing involvement in an area of creative coping with ourselves and with others.

NOTES

[1]Barbour, Alton and Goldberg, Alvin, Interpersonal Communication: Teaching Strategies and Resources, New York: Speech Communication Association, 1974.

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